to recreation parks, pisciculture farms and also act as water supply sources for local neighbourhood. There are some mines which have been given to West Bengal Government for water supply schemes.

(b) However, no specific offers have been received by the Government for development of surface areas over worked out underground mines.

Target for broadband connections

1025. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a target to provide two crore broadband connections by the year 2010;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that even less than 25 lakhs broadband connections were provided in the last seven years; and

(c) if so, the specific efforts proposed to be made for achieving this target?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Broadband Policy 2004 envisaged a target of 2 crore Broadband connections by 2010. As on 30th September, 2007, 26.12 lakh broadband connections have been provided.

(c) In roder to increase the penetration of Broadband services in the country, various steps taken/being taken, *inter-alia*, are:

(i) Both outdoor and indoor usage of low power Wi-fi and Wireless Broadband systems in 2.4 GHz-2.4835 GHz band, and use of low power indoor systems in 5.15-5.35 GHz and 5.725-5.875 GHz have been delicensed.

(ii) Indian Telegraph Act, 1885 has been suitably amended to enable Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) support for provision of Broadband connectivity to villages in a phased manner.

(iii) Connectivity of 512 Kbps with Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) 2 Plus technology (on wire) is being provided to Common Service Centres (CSCs) from 20,000 existing exchanges in rural areas having optical fibre connectivity.

(iv) USOF support is being provided for setting up and managing 7871 infrastructure sites spread over 500 Districts for provision of mobile services in rural and remote areas which are not covered by wireless signal. This infrastructure will be used to provide Broadband connectivity from the newly covered Block/Taluka headquarters.

(v) Government will now provide spectrum to three operators in the 2.5 GHz band for providing Broadband Wireless Access.

Death claims under Postal Life Insurance Scheme

1026. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that settlement of death claims take very long time in the Postal Lif Insurance Scheme; and

(b) the target period for settlement of each such claim?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS ANI INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir. Death claim received with complete papers and where no investigations into the *bona fide* of the claim are required, are settled well with in the target time.

(b) Target period for settlement of such claims is 60 days, after receipt of complete paper and where no further investigation into the *bona fide* of the case is required.

Spectrum allotment to PSUs and Government departments

1027. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS ANI INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has proposed to enforce more accountability on the spectrum allotted to PSUs and Government departments at nc cost or very low cost;

(b) whether TRAI has observed that spectrum allotted to PSUs and Governmen undertakings are not fully utilized and remain idle; and

(c) whether TRAI has proposed that spectrum capacity vacated by PSUs and Governmen departments can better be utilized for commercial telephony and wireless broadband services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) TRAI in its recent recommendations on "Review of license terms and conditions and capping of number of access providers" dated August 28, 2007 has observed, among others, that presently, large parts of the spectrum have been set aside for use by public sector (*e.g.* Government departments, state-owned enterprises, Military). Subjecting public spectrum use to market discipline can result in widespread efficiency gains within and beyond the public sector, etc. Further, TRAI in its recommendation dated 27 September, 2006 has also recommended that some of the spectrum bands may be refarmed/vacated from incumbent users of PSUs and Government departments for mobile telephony and Broadband Wireless Access (BWA) Services.

International Money Order Scheme

1028. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any plan to introduce International Money Order Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is expected to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Sir, Department of Posts